

Prospectus

Note: This prospectus is a complete first form exactly as it will appear in the book entitled,

Catholic Ecclesiology

By EDWARD JOSEPH WEBER
Architect

The book contains descriptive text, diagrams and plates of Catholic buildings, liturgically correct church furnishings, etc., all of which are from the author's own work.

There are 76 pages of text and 96 pages of illustrations contained in the book which is 9"x12" in size.

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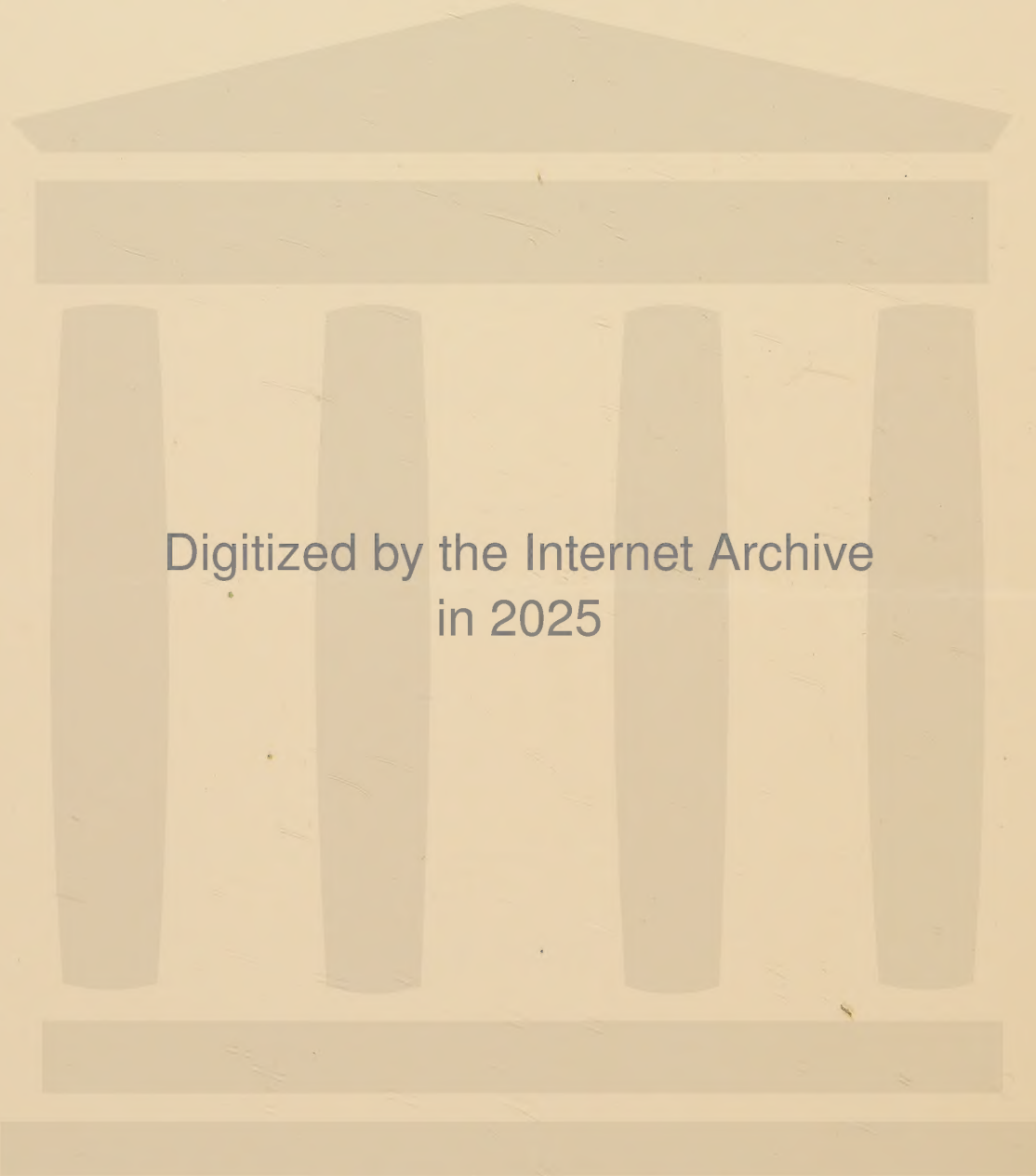
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Catholic Ecclesiology

Κύριε, ἡγάπησα εὐπρέπειαν οἴκου σου
—Psalm XXV, 8

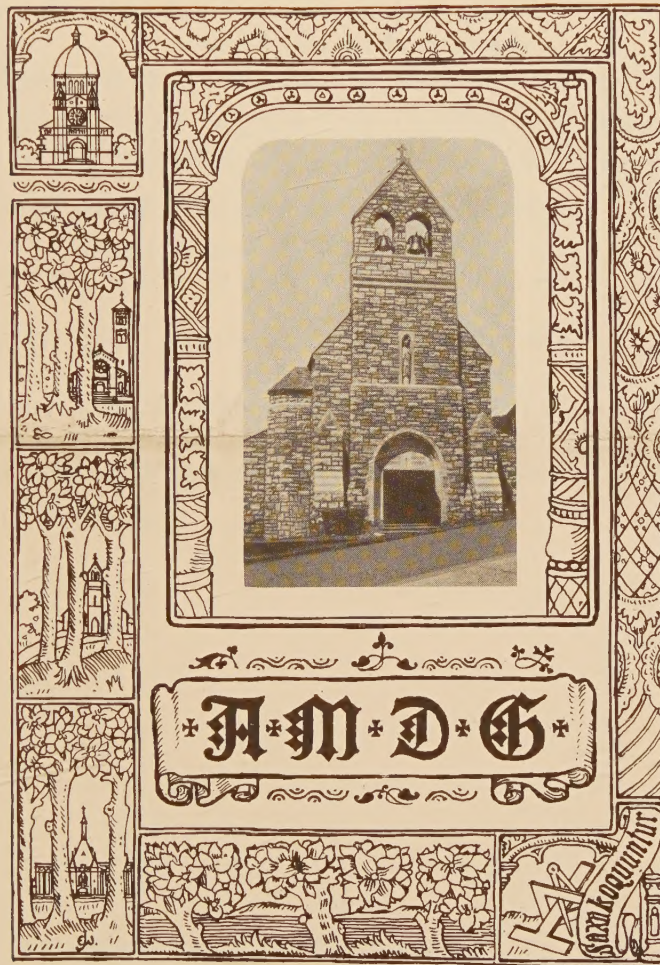


CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOSEPH, WHEELING, W. VA.
The High Altar

Catholic Ecclesiology

By Edward Joseph Weber, Architect, A.A.I.A.

Boston Architectural Club Traveling Scholar, Pupil
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Containing Chapters on the Liturgically Correct Church and Furnishings
and Illustrated with Photographs and Drawings
of the Author's Work

Pittsburgh, Pa.
mcmxxvii

The Architects Gift to the Church

" . . . That the dome may be raised in the square,
that the shrine may be placed
By the wayside, that cloister and chapel may rise in the
waste,
The rich will bestow of their bounty, the poor of their
dole;
For his gift, in their walls shall be builded a part of his
soul.
So, though he be heedless or slothful, with fervor
increasing,
The part of his soul that is in them shall pray without
ceasing,
So shall he have part with the Seraphs, who, ever before
Him,
Untiring, through ages of ages, cease not to adore Him."

FRANCIS P. SULLIVAN

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BY

EDWARD JOSEPH WEBER

FIFTH AVENUE ARCADE BUILDING

PITTSBURGH, PA.

To Right Reverend John J. Swint, Bishop of Wheeling, West
Virginia, this volume is with great respect dedicated by
his very humble servant Edward Joseph Weber,
Feast of St. Paul, First Hermit, Nineteen
Hundred and Twenty-Seven

Author's Preface

THE following pages have been written with a sincere desire to direct attention to the beauty and utility of Catholic Ecclesiology when properly applied. Nor is it only from the viewpoint of the artist that the work has been undertaken; it has been undertaken to emphasize the great service to souls that may be rendered by building on the sound foundation of the sacred Liturgy of the Church. In the great Diocese of Pittsburgh the writer has been helped and encouraged by many who have felt a kindred urge; but to no one, he can truthfully say, does he owe more, because of his powerful contribution to the development of the liturgical spirit in everything that pertains to the devotional life, than to the Right Reverend Hugh C. Boyle, D.D., Bishop of the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

Until recently, the Catholic Church in the United States had not the opportunity, owing, principally, to financial difficulties and lack of talent to build in a dignified and substantial manner. But conditions have changed, and a serious effort should now be made to make our ecclesiastical structures creations of beauty. Let us then—all of us who are really interested—make an effort for better church architecture; let us encourage men of talent to make this a life-work, and, like the bishops, kings and builders of Mediaeval times, let us patronize those who would clothe in beauty of form and color the house of Divine worship.

While the book is necessarily critical, the real purpose is to offer constructive criticism, to give useful technical and liturgical information to Catholic church architects, and to assist the reverend clergy, many of whom will some day be confronted with the problem of erecting ecclesiastical buildings of some sort. Without doubt all members of the clergy desire correct and beautiful churches and it is the desire of the author to assist them to know the good from the false in Catholic ecclesiology.

Most of us, naturally, have our own ideas about many things, but if we want the best results in the building of our churches, it is of the utmost importance that priests and building committees bear in mind that the authority of the architect should decide against prejudices that might have to be overcome, and to rely on his wisdom to choose the better way.

To the question, "Why is nothing said about heating, plumbing, lighting, acoustics, and so on," it may be answered that such things pertain pretty much to buildings in general, and do not directly affect our subject.

Articles germane to the subject that appeared from time to time in the "Catholic Observer" of Pittsburgh and in the "Charrette," the monthly brochure of the Pittsburgh Architectural Club have been reprinted, through the courtesy of these publications, with slight alterations.

My grateful acknowledgments are due to Mr. T. J. Flaherty for his invaluable criticisms, and suggestions relative to the letter press.

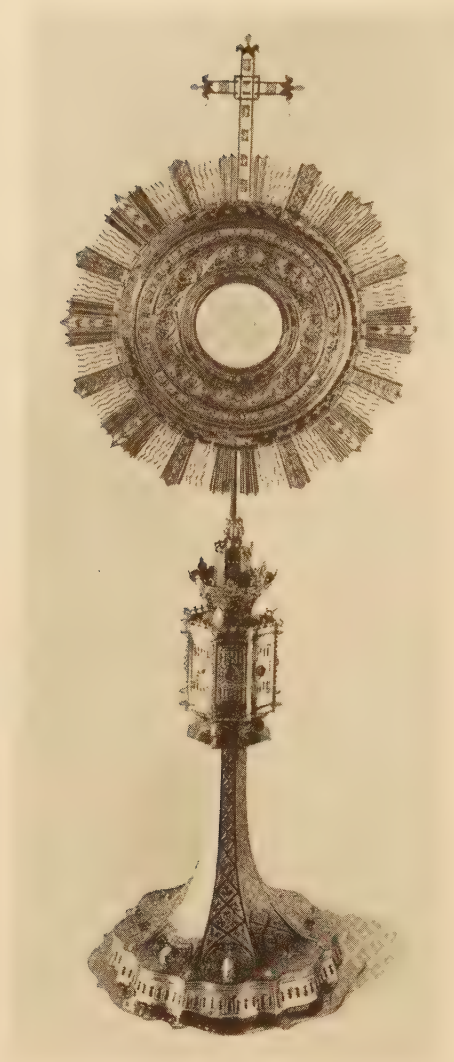
Introduction



R. WEBER'S book is an obvious proof that the Catholic Church in this teeming twentieth century is still the Mother of all the arts, just as she was in the placid days of earlier ages, when life was neither so vivid nor so tumultuous. His interesting volume proves that there is no longer any need to have ugly churches, for unlovely ecclesiastical edifices imply an unlovely view of religion. We have at hand in this country today a dozen or more brilliant Catholic architects of proven ability who are competent to make the Church of God appear before the eyes of men as lovely as a dream.

Mr. Weber is one of these. I have known and admired his work for very many years, and the photographs and drawings of his exquisite creations reproduced herein whether his simple but dignified country chapels, or his more elaborate city churches, or the altogether charming Synod Hall at Pittsburgh, or the majestic Wheeling Cathedral, are sufficient evidence that his work conforms in all essential details to the delightful description he has painted of the Ideal Church in one of the informing chapters of his valuable book.

THOMAS F. COAKLEY



ST. RAPHAEL'S CHURCH, PITTSBURGH, PA.
The Ostensorium

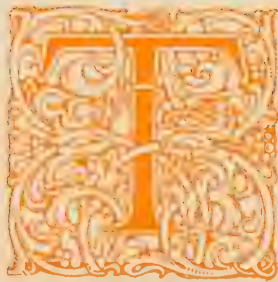
Catholic Ecclesiology

By Edward Joseph Weber

Chapter One

An Ideal Church

"Pulchrum est idem bono sola ratione differens"—Sum. Ia 2ae, q. xxvii a. i. ad 3



THE literature of architecture in its relation to the nature of the true and beautiful in art occupied a considerable part of my time some years ago and while I found much that was captivating and interesting, it was not until my attention was called to that great treasure house of wisdom, "The Summa" of St. Thomas Aquinas, that I found a reference to the subject so clear and logical that it has ever since been retained in mind. "The beautiful," says St. Thomas, "is the same thing as the good, from which it is only mentally distinguished. When an object is such that it offers several elements at least virtually distinct, and these elements conspire to give to the whole a unity, each part bearing a proportion to the total nature of the thing, then there is offered to the mind an object which delights the sight and is called beautiful."

These words so adequately express what I shall try to bring out in the following pages that the reader is asked to hold them in memory as we make our way through the subject with which this book deals. Let us begin, then, with a description of an ideal church built in the Middle Ages. Let us hark back to the days of our forefathers, to the Ages of Faith, and visit a church in a country—England—where the town type of parish edifice was perfected. This particular specimen of church architecture is selected because it is a logical development of the great building traditions brought to England by William the Conquerer and his followers from Normandy, and exemplifies in a most striking manner the elements that make for unity, truth and beauty.

We must perforce choose one from many hundreds, and although the choice is difficult, it is not thought unseemly to choose from a type which synchronizes with



Plate I

CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOSEPH, WHEELING, W. VA.

The Main Portal—Sculpture by Francis Aretz

the touchstone of Gothic architecture, the “Grande Gothique” of the “Isle de France.”

The edifice selected was built with the spirit that should animate one who loves the house of God as the place in which the Holy Mass is celebrated. It is by far the loveliest looking of all the buildings in the village. A lawn with great oaks, evergreens and shrubbery placed in telling spots surrounds it; yew and hawthorne hedges on the north side and the east, and a stone wall to the west and south mark the boundaries of the property on which it stands.

The disposition of the building on the “terrain” was so made that the greatest amount of space was reserved at the south side; which space was used as the country churchyard, and greatly enhanced the beauty of the ensemble. The buildings in the square have encroached considerably upon the original ground allotted to the parish, but there still remains enough to give a proper setting.

Constructed of local stone simply and unaffectedly without fancy trimmings, the building has a dignity commensurate with its importance as the dwelling place of the Almighty. There is a door to the south, protected by a low but deep porch, not of great width yet with enough to permit a seat on either side for the use of the people when visiting the final resting place of all that is mortal of the faithful departed. The aisle walls are high and the roofs gently slope to the clerestory which in turn is covered with a framework of acutely pointed design. The west front is buttressed with solid masses of material, a beautifully mullioned and traceried window takes its place as a dominating feature over the portal and a rightly proportioned central tower, ivy-mantled and topped by a bell stage and broached stone spire crowns the whole.

Wending our way among the grave stones of the church yard we pass along the southside to the chancel of the church. It is not wide but can boast of considerable depth, and the roof thereof is lower than that of the nave by about seven or eight feet, thereby exposing a bit of vertical wall, carried by the sanctuary arch, on which is placed a suitably designed bell cote, used in ages gone by for the tolling of the Sanctus. A low pointed and beautifully moulded priest's door is disclosed at the side of the chancel, cutting directly into the sanctuary—as there were no sacristies for this type of church in those days. The end walls are gabled and crowned by interestingly chiseled stone crosses of varied design. A magnificent window, filled with lovely tracery containing well delineated cusplings, covers practically the entire east wall of the chancel, and its rich stained glass is telling from within. On the north side a delightful chantry chapel will be found. Coming

again to the facade we glance for a moment at the carved oaken door with its artistic metal work of hinges and lock; time has stained the wood a beautiful brown.

It is Sunday. Spring is in the air on this lovely quiet morning and the bright sun filters its rays through the great east window on which is portrayed in magnificent color the story of Our Lord's life and death. One by one the town's people and peasant folk begin to wend their way toward the principal portal. Presently the great peal of bells begins to carry across the country side, bringing, instead of sparsely scattered groups here and there, great crowds which are now blackening the pathways.

Let us turn the ring of the huge lock and pass within. Mass is being offered up. The magnificent chanting of the choir is heard accompanied by the deep tones of the organ, and one's thoughts are lifted from mundane things until the devotional "*Adoremus in Aeternum, Sanctissimum Sacramentum*" dismisses the worshippers. Services over, we have leisure to examine more intimately the glories within. We see symbolized everywhere the three great truths that animate the soul of the Christian—the Sacrifice on Calvary, the Blessed Trinity and the Resurrection—the first by the many representations of the cross, the second by the triple windows, trefoils, etc., and the last is brought to the spectator's mind by the vertical movement expressed with sharply pointed arches, elongated windows and the engaged colonnettes rising from the capitals of the pillars, upon which are supported the brackets that carry the trusses of the magnificently painted roof.

Of primary importance are the high altar, the chancel screen supporting the crucifixion group of carved wood, and the choir stalls. All are profuse with traceries carved in gorgeously colored oak; color is everywhere most vivid and gold is unstintingly made use of. There are beautiful paintings of Our Lord and the Four Evangelists on the high altar, and the saints are portrayed at other appropriate places. The side altars are small, so that the high altar may dominate, and are placed against the wood screen, one at each side of the central opening to the chancel. The priest's sedilia is of carved and pinnaced stone, recessed in the wall and covered with leathern cushions, while the rich tile and marble floor of the sanctuary has several fine sepulchral brasses imbedded therein.

The aisles at each side are separated from the nave by pillars made of clustered shafts richly moulded at the bases. There are tastily carved scrolls of leaves under the abacci of the capitals and no two carvings are of the same design. The acutely pointed arches have cunningly moulded archivolt and a delightful naivete is no-

Catholic Ecclesiology

ticeable in the arcades for the reason that the columns are spaced slightly different thus producing a gentle variety in the heights of the arches.

A profusion of dressed stone is manifest everywhere; in fact, the entire interior is of this material save the clerestory walls together with those of the sanctuary; these are richly decorated over wavy stucco.

Outside the sanctuary, the most exquisite wood work is the roof of the nave, marvelous in its intricate mouldings and carving brilliantly emblazoned with azure, vermillion and gold.

The floor of the nave is of random shaped flat stones, though it is covered in goodly part by the fine old oak benches, interestingly varied with their carved poppy heads.

While the memory of this beautiful Sunday service is still vivid, and while the lovely aroma of the incense and wax tapers lingers, let us wend our way elsewhere. With the snap of the latch we are in the bright sunlight, and as we regretfully leave this charming work of ecclesiastical art we often and longingly glance backward, wondering when we shall again behold a house of God so soul-satisfying and uplifting.



Plate II.
SAINT MARK'S, VENICE
E. J. W. del.

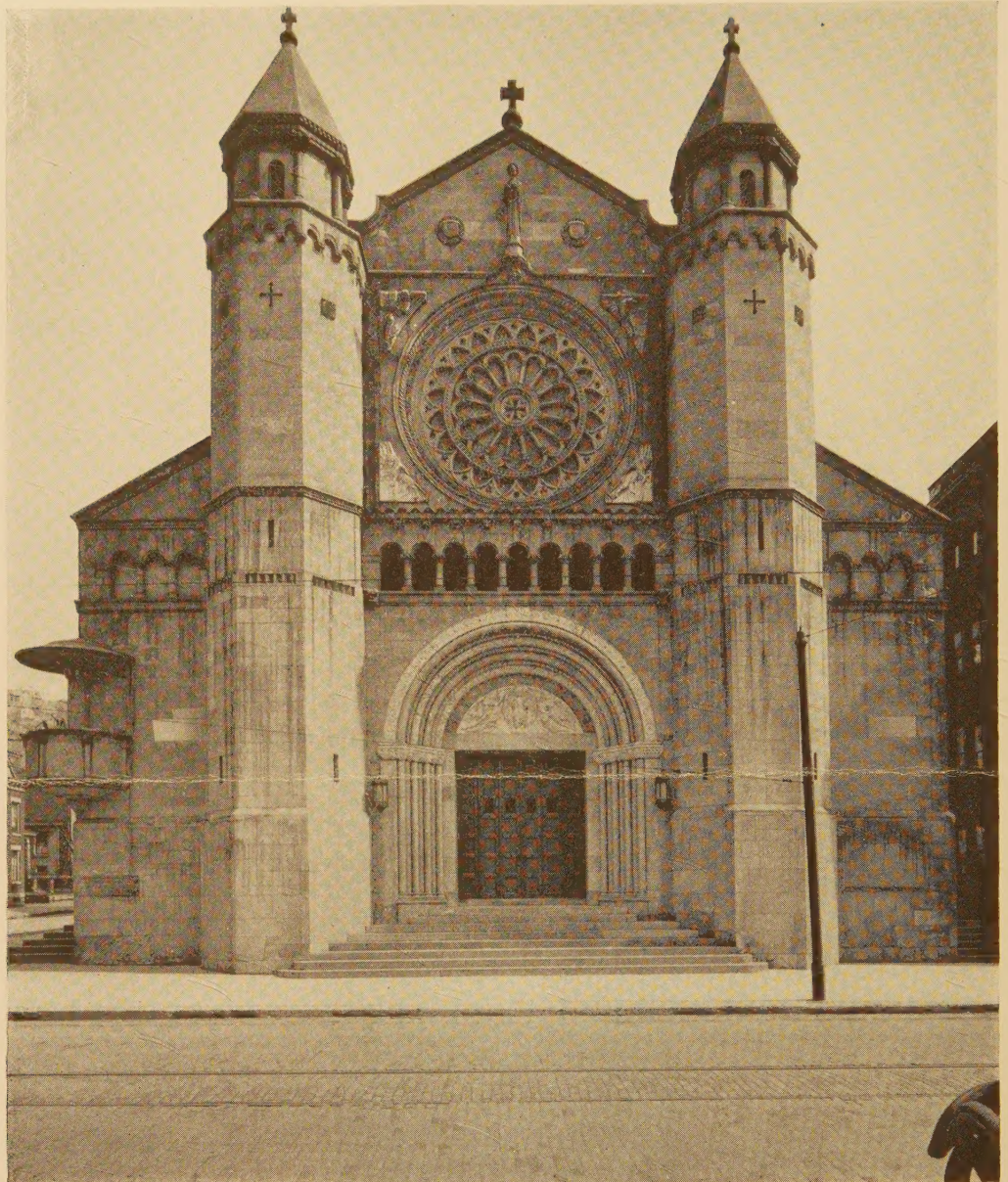


Plate III.

CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOSEPH, WHEELING, W. VA.
The West Front

